

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

Meeting minutes-May 1, 2002

Riehle Plaza, The Depot

Lafayette, IN

Voting members present

Allen County-Ron James
Carroll County- Teresa Maxwell
Carroll County-Donna Romein (alt.)
Cass County-Janet Fawley
DNR-Steve Morris
Fountain County-Ron Howard
Huntington County-Mike Mettler
Miami County-Ken Einselen
Parke County-John H. Isaacs
Sullivan County-John Gettinger
Tippecanoe County-Norman Neiburger
Vigo County-Keith Ruble (alternate)
Warren County-Louise Jewell

Proxies

Wells County-Ron James
Adams County-Norman Neiburger

Non-voting members present

DOC Tourism-Marianna Weinzapfel
IDEM-Matt Jarvis (alternate)

Members not present

Gibson County
Jay County
Knox County
Posey County
Vermillion County
Wabash County
DNR – Historic Preservation & Arch.
INDOT

Commission and DNR staff present

Susan Benner – WRHCC Exec. Director
Cynthia Webb - DNR

Guests

Joe Payne-West Lafayette Parks
Jim Hawley-Area Plan Commission of
Tippecanoe County
Bernie Dahl-Banks of the Wabash
Rory Robinson-NPS-RTCA
Pat & John Corey-Vision 2020
Kathy Dale-Vision 2020
Dennis Carson-GLCDC
Bob Reiling-GLCDC
Mike Gibson-GLCDC

CALL TO ORDER

President Lucky Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. All attendees present introduced themselves.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MARCH 6, 2002 MEETING MINUTES

Ron James made the motion to approve the minutes as written. John Gettinger seconded the motion and motion passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lucky commented on the new office for Executive Director, Susan Benner. The office is not ready at this time for Susan to move into. The office still needs furniture and amenities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Susan Benner thanked Division of Outdoor Recreation for allowing her the use of office equipment and providing her with a desk while the office in Lafayette is being finished.

Susan should be notified of any corridor special events or news articles about the commission. Susan's business number is 765-427-1505.

Susan reported she has been researching various grant programs including SIA, Elliott Foundation, Sam Ropchan Environmental Endowment Fund, IDEM 319 Grants & 205(j), Resource Conservation & Development's (RC&D's), Lilly Tippecanoe Labs, and EPA Environmental Education Grants. The EPA Environmental Grant at this time thought is not awarding any money due to budget constraints. Several of these grants are only open to non-profit organizations. Partnering with the RC&D's who have non-profit status, on projects could be a means in receiving the grant monies.

Susan has also been exploring the idea of Wabash River Expeditions for school kids. This would be similar to the project initiated by Sullivan County SWCD. Possible funding sources are through SIA grants and IDEM 319 funds. Possible partners in this project are the Arrowhead, Four Rivers and Sycamore RC&D and DNR Riverwatch.

After some discussion, there was general agreement that the commission should not be directly organizing river expeditions, but serve more as a catalyst for interested communities and schools. With this in mind, John Gettinger motioned that the president appoint an educational committee. Keith Ruble seconded the motion. Motion passed. John Gettinger, Ron Howard and Keith Ruble agreed to serve on the education committee. Steve Morris agreed to provide the commission with historical information about the Education Committee and other committees that had been established by the commission.

A tabletop exhibit display has been ordered for the commission. After the display is delivered, Susan will put together an exhibit for the commission. Possible exhibit opportunities include the Wabash Riverfest on July 13th and the Soil and Water Society Annual meeting in July in Indianapolis.

Susan has created a database for the commission that includes all county commissioners and state legislators for the nineteen corridor counties. Susan will be sending out a letter to appointed commission members asking to set up meetings with her and their county commissioners and legislators.

Susan reported that a table has been created that identifies the population counts along the Wabash River for 27 counties at 10, 5 and 1-mile intervals from the river. This information is available to any interested individuals.

Susan is working with Marianna Weinzapfel to revise and reprint the commission informational brochure.

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris reported a balance of \$4.00 in the commission's operating fund from the \$10,000 appropriated in 1997. Steve stated that the DNR budget director said this account needs to be closed.

From the 2001 appropriation of \$75,000, the balance for the Executive Director expenses is \$59,750.00. The balance for the commission operating expenses is \$4884.00. There appears to be plenty of money to purchase any necessary supplies for the commission. Susan has been set up with a cell phone for which we will be billed. Steve is trying to set up a petty cash checking account to simplify the process for paying for items that cost less than \$500.

BANKS OF THE WABASH REPORT

Bernie Dahl reported that Banks of the Wabash will have their annual meeting on June 19th at the Cuyahoga Cinergy plant. River Awards will be presented as part of the annual meeting.

Bernie also reported on the Wabash Walking Weekend. It will be August 10th and 11th. Events are being planned at various locations along the river from Logansport to Terre Haute. Banks of the Wabash newsletter will soon be out with more details.

OLD BUSINESS

Corridor management plan committee

Rory Robinson reported that the 1st round of meetings began the night before in Huntington. The meeting went well with approximately 30-40 people in attendance. Janet Fawley demonstrated a five minute power point presentation she put together for the meetings. The next meetings will be tonight in West Lafayette and tomorrow evening in Vincennes.

Newsletter

Steve Morris reported that the newsletter was sent out with announcements for the corridor planning meetings.

Equipment/Supplies

Susan Benner mentioned the need for postage stamps for the commission office.

Keith Ruble asked about the supply of project signs and stressed the need to have these signs up to recognize the corridor and the commission. Steve Morris will check on the supply of project signs and remind grant administrators that funded projects are to receive signs.

SPEAKER

Speakers from Greater Lafayette Vision 2020 were John Corey-Implementation Steering Committee Chair, and Kathy Dale-Managing Director. Speakers from Greater Lafayette Community Development Corporation were Dennis Carson-Vice President, Mike Gibson-Executive Committee, and Bob Reiling-Executive Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Corridor Brochure Supply

Steve Morris informed the commission that there are only eight boxes of the color corridor brochures left. Janet Fawley will check on the cost of getting more printed.

Suggestions for future speakers

Sandy Drake is expected to speak at the next meeting about a Wabash River expedition project for school children.

Susan Benner reported Mercedes Brugh with Little Turtle Waterway Corporation would like to speak at a later date.

Susan Benner suggested inviting Mr. Beamer, a teacher in Wabash to speak about his canoe trip down the Wabash River and all the way to Louisiana.

Letters sent/Letters received

We received a letter from Sycamore Trails about Earth Day at the Lake.

We received a letter from Mercer Soil & Water District, requesting a letter of support for the Wabash River Watershed Alliance.

We also received a letter from the Federal Highway Administration regarding the Rangeline Road bridge near Huntington.

Other items

Ron Howard spoke of the Eagle's Day that took place in February, in Vermillion County, sponsored by Cinergy. David Elkins extended an invitation to hold our commission meeting there. There would be a tour of the plant, a slide presentation and a chance to go up on the observation towers. Ron Howard made a motion that in January the commission's meeting be held at Cinergy in Cayuga. Keith Ruble seconded the motion. Motion passed.

At this time Steve Morris brought to the attention of the commission the need to purchase a digital camera for the Executive Director, Susan Benner. Steve made the motion to purchase a digital camera. John Gettinger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Janet Fawley made a motion to give Steve authority to use the money in the operating budget for purchases needed for the Executive Director. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion passed

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Other Items Continued

At this time Steve Morris had an inquiry about travel expenses being approved by the commission. Janet Fawley made a motion to approve all travel expenses for all regular commission meetings, committee meetings and planning meetings up to and through May 2nd. John Issacs seconded the motion. Motion passed. Lucky made the recommendation that the motion should be passed and then look at the ruling about travel expenses made when Nancy Grenard was president of the commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

John Gettinger reminded the commission of the upcoming Merom Bluff Chautauqua being held June 7th, 8th and 9th.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Comments by Commission Alternates

None

Comments by visitors

None

Final comments by Commission Members

There was some discussion of appointing a treasurer for the commission. Steve Morris suggested that the president, secretary and executive director propose an operating budget for the next fiscal year.

NEXT MEETING -July 10th, 1 PM, in Sullivan County-specific location to be announced (*Note: July meeting has since been moved to Vigo County at Fairbanks Park in Terre Haute.*)

ADJOURNMENT

Janet Fawley made a motion to adjourn, Ken Einselen seconded the motion. Adjourned.